



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# National Fish Passage Program Northeast Region

*From Freshwater to Saltwater and Back!*

## Tradition and Resources

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Northeast Region (Service) encompasses 13 states including Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia. More than 66 million people, about a quarter of the nation's population, live within this area and have traditionally depended on the Region's rivers to sustain valuable fisheries and other local economic benefits. The Service has identified eight ecosystem units (watersheds) that have all or a portion of their drainage within the region; originating high in the Green, White, Adirondack, Catskill, Allegheny, and Blue Ridge Mountains, and flowing into the Atlantic Ocean, Great Lakes, and Mississippi River.

## Survival of the Species

Development and reproduction of many aquatic species involves completing a cycle of upstream and downstream movements within and between the lakes, rivers, and oceans.



Locations of Fish Passage Program projects in the Northeast Region.



Dam removal on Manatawney Creek, PA. USFWS photo.

Residential and industrial growth over the past two centuries have impacted many of these streams and coastlines that are important for the survival of such species as Atlantic salmon, striped bass, American eel, herring, shad, and sturgeon. Thousands of dams, culverts, dikes, water diversions, and other artificial barriers have impeded the movement of these species, resulting in lower populations.

## What is the Fish Passage Program?

The Northeast Region's Fish Passage Program is a voluntary, non-regulatory program that provides funding and technical assistance to work with partners to remove or bypass barriers to fish movement.

Types of project assistance include providing information on habitat needs and methods for fish to bypass barriers, and technical engineering

support for reviewing project designs and recommending the most cost-effective techniques.

## Program Accomplishments

From 1999-2002, the Fish Passage Program in the Northeast Region, in cooperation with 38 different partners, has implemented 11 projects that improved fish passage by removing dams, and designing or building fishways. These projects have directly improved passage to 508 miles of riverine habitat and over 1,000 acres of wetland area. The back page describes three project accomplishments. In addition, the Program has been successful in establishing partnerships to identify and prioritize fish passage barriers within State or watershed boundaries. Identifying barriers in the northeast is part of a larger Fish Passage Program initiative to develop a national inventory of all fish passage barriers.

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***The goal of the National Fish Passage Program is to restore native fish and other aquatic species to self-sustaining levels by reconnecting habitat that has been fragmented by barriers.***

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#### ***Good Hope Dam, PA***

The Good Hope dam and impoundment on Conodoquinet Creek, PA no longer served a functional purpose, was in an advanced state of disrepair, and had no identifiable owner (left). The dam was removed, opening 22 miles of riverine habitat for shad, herring, alewife, and other resident fish species (right). *USFWS photos.*



#### ***East Machias Dam, ME***

The East Machias Dam was constructed in 1926. The dam became a community eyesore, safety hazard, and required annual maintenance (above). Dam removal provided free passage to 296 river miles for Atlantic salmon, alewives, shad, blueback herring and rainbow smelt, and eliminated the need for annual maintenance (below). *USFWS photos.*



#### ***Pleasant Pond Dam, ME***

A fishway was installed at Pleasant Pond dam (below), allowing access to spawning habitat for an estimated 26,880 adult alewives annually. Providing fish passage at Pleasant Pond Dam was a key step in completing restoration efforts of 28 river miles in the Sebasticook River Basin, Maine. *USFWS photo.*



#### **For more information, contact:**

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